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E. John B. Allen
Plymouth State College

E. JOHN B. ALLEN

"SKEEING" IN MAINE: THE EARLY YEARS, 1870s TO 1920s

Although we think of skiing as a fairly contemporary sport, the roots of this "Ideal Outdoor Winter Pastime" are quite venerable. Maine contributed two aspects to the development of skiing: the first documented account of people on skis in the Northeast; and the production of America's first "How to Skee" book, an illustration from which is reproduced above. *Theo. Johnsen Company catalog (1905), courtesy of the New England Ski Museum, Franconia, New Hampshire*

The last decade has seen an astonishing interest in the history of sports. This reflects an increased emphasis given to the ubiquitous presence of sport in our lives, on an international, national, and local level. Sports boast their own academic and popular museums, societies, books, and articles. Skiing has shared in the recent flurry of academic and popular investigations.

In the northeastern region of the United States, a personal collection of old skis is exhibited at Hunter Mountain, New York. Nineteenth-century woodsmen's skis are on view in the Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain Lake, and there has been

growing discussion of a Lake Placid Museum to commemorate both the 1932 and the 1980 Winter Olympic Games. The Vermont Historical Society displays skis, and there is presently an attempt to start a Vermont Ski Museum. In neighboring New Hampshire, the New England Ski Museum in Franconia Notch is over a decade old and thriving.

Maine is also looking to its ski heritage. Sugarloaf Mountain mounted a thirty-fifth anniversary exhibit; L.L. Bean ran an historical exhibit window in 1988; and Ski Maine, the state's promotional office, guards old brochures and similar memorabilia. In 1987, an informal group gathered in Litchfield to see if some sort of preservation effort could be mounted. This group showed more interest in mechanized skiing, the rope tow era, and the beginnings of ski areas than in pre-modern skiing. However, the oldest participant at the Litchfield meeting had been on skis in the state in 1916, before the mechanized era, and the group was interested to find out that people in Maine had actually been on skis for a very long time before that – in fact, since 1871.

While the main stages of skiing history lie elsewhere, Maine nevertheless provided two unique contributions. One, the first documented account of people on skis in the Northeast, comes from William Widgery Thomas's community of New Sweden in 1871. This presents an opportunity to look at the transfer of skiing culture from the old country to the new land. The second is the production of America's first "How to Skee" book. Published in 1905 by the Theo. Johnsen Company of Portland, it primarily appealed to a wealthy clientele who enjoyed sporting on skis, something quite different from the utilitarian activities of Maine's immigrant Swedes.

Given the associations attached to the word "skiing" today, it is appropriate to make some generalizations about what was called the "skisport" in the United States. Most sources agree that skiing is about five thousand years old, although the Russians are presently claiming an artifact of six thousand years.[1] Associated with nomadic hunting, a pantheon of Norse gods, folklore, and myth, skiing became a Scandinavian, and particu-

Skiing in Maine probably got its start in the New Sweden Colony initated by Settlement Commissioner William Widgery Thomas, Jr. in 1870. The New Sweden Historical Museum's Carlstrom skis are an important part of this town's heritage.

Photo courtesy of the author and the New Sweden Historical Museum.

larly Norwegian, preserve in the nineteenth century. When the Scandinavians took to skiing for amusement and recreation, they thought of it in terms of *Idraet* (Norwegian) and *Idrott* (Swedish), a word always translated as sport, but meaning much more: it carried a cultural heritage which the nineteenth century molded into a nationalistic morality brought about by "muscular effort" in God's great outdoors.[2] Oversimplifying, a skier was a secularized winter "muscular Christian." These attitudes were brought to the United States by Scandinavian immigrants who arrived in increasing numbers in the latter half of the nineteenth century.[3]

A midwestern Norwegian language journal provides the first known record of a person on skis in the United States near Beloit, Wisconsin, in 1841.[4] In the Midwest and in the Californian mining camps of the Sierra Nevada, individuals hunted, collected taxes, delivered mail, and were married on skis.[5] Skis were essentially utilitarian equipment used just as they had been back in the old country.

Aside from the utilitarian usage of skis, skiing developed a competitive value when Californian miners developed a unique

form of down-mountain racing on short courses of one to two thousand feet. This occurred even before organized competitions for long-distance races and jumps began in Norway. Camp rivalry was a major ingredient of the fun and frolics of a carnival race meeting.[6] In the Midwest, immigrant communities took to ski jumping as a way of promoting their club and town. By 1905, events were sufficiently organized to effect a National Ski Association to regulate the sport.[7]

The Californian skisport died out with the gold and silver fever, but the Midwest continued its dominant role as more and more Scandinavian immigrants joined family and friends in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Iowa and provided an endless pool of experienced skiers.

It was different in Maine. In the post-Civil War decades, the rural population was declining, and vast areas of northern and western Maine were open lands. In March 1869 the state resolved "to promote the settlement of the public and other lands" by appointing three commissioners of settlement. William Widgery Thomas, Jr., one of the commissioners, had extensive diplomatic experience as ambassador to Sweden for Presidents Arthur and Harrison.[8] Thomas had lived among the Swedes for years and was impressed with their hardy quality. He returned to the United States convinced that Swedes would make just the right sort of settlers for Maine. When Thomas became consul in Goteborg (Gothenburg), he made immediate plans for encouraging Swedes to emigrate to America. Undeterred by the failure of a group of Maine gentlemen to procure Swedish labor in 1864, he raised private money to send veterans from the 1864 war in Denmark to fight in America.[9] Then he had a larger vision. He proposed to find "twenty-five stalwart young men with thrifty wives and families" to settle in Aroostook County.[10] The story of how he recruited the colonists and brought them over is well known.[11] Twenty-two men, eleven women, and eighteen children arrived in New Sweden on July 23, 1870.[12]

The first two public buildings of the community were the church and the school, the latter opening on November 13,

1871. That first winter some parents with two children in school came for examination day on skis, pulling their baby in a sled.[13] Thomas took pains to show the legislature how highly education was prized by the immigrants. Some children, as he pointed out, came five miles to school "slipping over the snow on *skidor*, Swedish snow-shoes."[14] People may have been on skis in New England before these immigrants in Maine, but Thomas's description stands as the earliest unequivocal record of the use of skis in the Northeast. He repeated this story as he chronicled New Sweden's success on the tenth and twenty-fifth anniversaries.[15] Elsewhere, he remembered a row of skis lining the outside wall, "a strange sight in a Yankee school house."[16] For the immigrants, skis were nothing but utilitarian, and what had been good for Old *Sverige* was good for New Sweden.

As Swedish immigrants settled in other parts of Maine — about a thousand by 1873 — they found the Indian snowshoe the only method for snow travel.[17] They immediately introduced their skis. Downeast hunters on snowshoes found themselves in a bind when Swedish immigrant Frederick Jorgensen arrived as game warden in the Wilson Mills area in 1902. In that part of the state no one had seen a pair of skis before, and Jorgensen was ridiculed while the merits of snowshoe and ski were debated. Inevitably there had to be a race. Jorgensen was home before the snowshoer had reached the halfway mark. Poachers particularly took notice. In fact, Jorgensen's skis became an "everlasting trademark," and from time to time he removed them, he said, "because if I got off the highway on skis it would have been a dead giveaway....When people saw my tracks it was as if a loud speaker had announced over the countryside, The Warden is Coming!"[18]

Jorgensen's ability to move through the woods — over fifty miles a day in good going — was not lost on other state wildlife employees. Chief Warden H.O. Templeton took to a motorcycle in the summer and to skis in the winter, where he traveled "a pile of country in a day" and caught "the up river gentry snowshoed and red handed."[19] The Machias Republican in 1910 was impressed enough to print a reader's admiration in ten verses, one of which read:

But when the winter came around
What did the farmers see?
But Warden H.O. Templeton
A going on a skee.

The verse ended by suggesting that poaching would be possible only if Templeton with his motorcycle and skis moved on:

And now the farmers' only hope is
That some day he will move,
And in another section,
With his skees and cycle rove.[20]

Although the skis that Warden Templeton and the immigrants used could have been made in Scandinavian factories, immigrants tended to make their own from local wood. A pair of very rough ash skis has turned up near Damariscotta, and birch was popular in New Sweden.[21] Extant skis made in New Sweden around 1900-1910 have one aspect unique in the history of American skiing: they are of unequal length.[22] Such skis were common in Scandinavia; the short ski with pelt-covered bottom was the pushing ski, and the other one, often longer by as much as four feet, was the gliding ski. The turn-of-the-century New Sweden skis, however, show only a very small difference. Lars Stadig's skis, for example, differed by eight inches. The pair with the greatest inequality came from Madawaska: the long ski measures eleven feet nine inches and the short one, nine feet eleven inches.

These rough skis from the Damariscotta area were made in the 1890s and were typical of utilitarian skis used by Scandinavian immigrants. They featured a leather loop into which the boots were thrust and a heel block to more or less hold the foot in place.

Photo courtesy of the author and the New England Ski Museum.

There is no fur underneath the short ski; indeed, both skis are grooved in exactly the same manner.

In Scandinavia, skis which differed considerably in length were so made for ease of maneuvering. It is difficult to understand what prompted the minor difference in Maine skis. The last maker of unequal length skis – Henry Anderson began making them in 1926 – maintained that they were easier to handle if the skier hit drifts at speed. Old-timers who knew the ski makers have no explanation.[23]

In Maine, skiing originated as a practical mode of everyday travel. Still, we should not make too much of the utilitarian aspect of skiing during these early years. There were not many people on skis, and their influence did not spread far. When people began to use skis for sport in the late nineteenth century, we begin to hear more about it, although there are only occasional references to this new pleasure skiing. As skiing became "the skisport" in the Midwest, with the formation of clubs, rules of competition, prizes, and all the paraphernalia of organization, Scandinavians enjoined increasing numbers of Americans to share in its delights. As a spectator sport for thousands, skiing received increasing press coverage.

In the East, it attracted wealthier outdoors people with time and money to enjoy themselves, and it took two forms. One was mountaineering on skis; the other was social and recreational club activities. The first time the two were combined in Maine appears to be at an Appalachian Mountain Club outing in 1895. Members of the "snowshoe section" headquartered themselves at the Oxford Hotel in Fryeburg and recorded their success on the summit of Pleasant Mountain. The A.M.C. was a Boston club. At first the group was scientifically oriented, but by the 1890s club members enjoyed the challenge of a winter climb. The "snowshoe section" had been formed in 1882, so there was experience and enthusiasm for winter travel, and an impressive array of webbing dominates the photograph taken in front of the Fryeburg Hotel. Unfortunately, little is known about this excursion except that there was one "skee-man" on the trip. In other places in the Northeast the thrill of the skeeist's speed, as

opposed to the "swish-and-walk-a-mile" of the snowshoer, was gaining attention.[24]

If the A.M.C.'s excursion to Fryeburg had a social and organized quality to it, those who emulated the summer hike to mountain tops in winter displayed a more rugged individualism. The idea of mountaineering on skis was influenced by upper-class English sportsmen who enjoyed conquering yet another part of the world. This was a personal engagement between man and nature, and once accomplished, the person believed himself to be more manly and more moral. Not all who climbed mountains on skis had such Victorian perceptions, of course, but what was remarkable was the strong sense of disciplined fitness experienced by those who accomplished early ski ascents. Some even tried to influence others with this Americanized *Idraet*. They were a select few, however, and many knew each other or of each other.

For instance, in Maine, Norman Libby from Bridgton was attracted to Mount Washington where, for some years, he had a hand in editing the summer news sheet *Among the Clouds*. He had an interest in skiing, and in the winters of 1903 and 1904 had used skis on the mountain.[25] In February 1905 he made a pleasure excursion with a specific purpose: "to slide a portion of the down trip" which he managed without mishap. He had been accompanied part way up by the caretaker of the railroad company's property, but Mr. Marcotte was not a skier.[26]

For a far more ambitious project in the winter of 1907, Libby wished for a skiing comrade. He contacted Algernon G. Chandler of Brunswick, "one of the most companionable fellows," for a hundred-mile trip from Bridgton to Gorham, including a number of ascents, using skis most of the way. This was quite a challenge for Libby, and even more so for the inexperienced Chandler.

After two ascents of Pleasant Mountain, they skied into Fryeburg to take the train to North Conway. They enjoyed riding down the mountain on logs at Roderick's lumber camp before going on to Mount Washington – the goal of the trip. Originally

In the early twentieth century, ski touring and mountaineering were often combined. Norman Libby and A.G. Chandler (pictured to the right) explored Mt. Washington on skis on their trip from Bridgton, Maine.

Susan Chandler photo, courtesy of the author.

the idea had been to repeat what Norman Libby had found so exciting, "to ascend to the Half Way House simply to enjoy the exhilarating slide to the Glen House," down the Carriage Road. For the ascent, they bound their skis with rope, which gave some security on the crusted snow, and on the return had a grand time sliding. It was, as Libby put it, "rapid. With allowance for delays (mostly tumbles)...we made the four miles in a running time of twenty minutes."

In the meantime, the host of the Glen House had obtained creepers — iron-shod, crampon-like moccasins — and Libby and Chandler readily admitted to "a change of program." This brought them to the "climax" of their expedition: an ascent to the top of New England's highest mountain. Up they went as far as the Half Way House on skis. They left the skis there, and on creepers made it to the top, in a fearful wind. Back at the Half Way House, they put on their skis for the four-mile slide down to the Glen House meadows. The whole trip took nearly twelve hours. They journeyed home by "train and team."[27]

These Mount Washington excursions indicate the appeal skiing had for a few middle-class outdoorsmen in Maine; Libby was a respected and successful insurance agent; Chandler owned the Bates College bookstore. The disciplined effort of the

hundred-mile expedition was tempered by the fun of the down-mountain slides on Pleasant and Washington — just that combination of muscularity and merry-making that many found so attractive in the years around the turn of the century.

These individual mountain ascents drew little notice. Libby's accounts come from the local papers, hardly ones to reach a large audience. There were others who enjoyed ski mountaineering, but even when the most celebrated of all, Greenland explorer Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, climbed Whiteface in New York in 1912, he received virtually no attention from the press.[28] Climbing on skis required devotion to discipline and stamina. It went largely unnoticed in the years when the skisport was becoming a social pastime.

While Norman Libby was enjoying skiing in the Bridgton area, college men had taken it up in the Midwest and in New Hampshire. Martin Strand's ski factory in Minnesota had eleven years of production behind it in 1907. The National Ski Association, headquartered in Ishpeming, Michigan, oversaw tournament activity from 1905 on and within five years registered twenty-nine clubs spreading over six states.[29] In 1905 the patrician Lake Placid Club remained open for the winter for the first time. On the more popular level, skiing had received wide publicity in magazines like *Harper's* and *Leslie's*.[30] There was a sense that America, left breathless by the ever-increasing pace of industrialism, could find a healthy release from its nervousness in this splendid outdoor sport.

In 1905 the Theo. Johnsen Company of Portland tried to capitalize on this growing interest by producing finely made skis and accessories under their own "Tajco" label.[31] The Winter Sport of Skeeing, a quality catalog, half marketing tool, half instructional manual, spread the word. Although there had been a number of articles in the popular press on making skis and how and where to ski, the Johnsen catalog was the first publication in the United States to cover most aspects of the sport. Finding it impressive, one editor in the Midwest reprinted part of the manual in his newspaper.[32]

The front cover of the 1905 Johnsen catalog portrayed this new sport as a social winter delight. Besides the equipment Johnsen hoped to sell, the catalog offered, for the first time in America, a manual on how to "skee."

Courtesy New England Ski Museum.

A closer look at the catalog's design and production reveals significant information, including the fact that "skees" were available for youths at five and six feet, for ladies at seven feet, and for men at eight feet. These were the "popular models," worked on "true lines," which meant straight grained and no knots. The five-footers were $2.25, and eight-footers, $3.50. Then came three varieties of "special-type" skees, one for "coasting and all around skee sport," and two of "selected stock" suitable for any kind of snow. Jumping models had finishes of natural wood light, natural wood dark, black, and black with white grooves; the selection was staggering. Prices ranged from $2.25 to $18.00 for a ten-foot "special high grade skee of extra quality, specially prepared stock." Bindings ranged from loose leather wrapping lines at $1.00 through bamboo encased in leather at $2.50, to an expert binding with a rubber mat under the shoe, an aluminum plate, toe irons, and an adjustable leather heel strap for $4.00.

"No *skidor* (using the Swedish word) is well equipped unless he has at least one pair of push sticks and one long stick to use as occasion may require." Bamboo sticks, four-and-a-half feet long, started at $1.50 a pair; a six-foot single ash stick was also $1.50. A locking pair, which could double as a single pole, was $3.00. The single pole, a strong staff of five to six feet, was the usual equipment. Scandinavians seldom used poles, but those who were learning needed them to balance and brake. The use of two poles became common only around 1920.

Low moccasins and high moccasins were the cheaper footwear at $3.25 and $4.50. For those who could afford the best, Johnsen offered a "special Norwegian skee shoe, grain leather, hand sewed, made particularly for skee sport," at $12.00 a pair. Socks, heavy woolen leggings, a toque, and two pairs of gloves completed the outfit. The skier's investment ranged from $15.00 to $45.00, not to speak of the possibility of knickerbockers and a double-breasted jacket, which Johnsen suggested as most suitable. It was advisable to buy different skis, not just because one pair was for coasting, one for jumping, and the third for all-around skisport, but also because different types of skis ran better on different types of snow. When that delight could be "downy, fluffy, powdery, sandy, dusty, flowery, crystalline, brittle, gelatinous, salt-like, slithery, and watery," it is no wonder Johnsen advertised their many selections![33]

However much Johnsen might have wished to sell special skis for different events, the East offered no competitive network of clubs and tournaments, no college clubs, and none of the interest in organized skisport found in the Midwest. The only competition in Maine was a byproduct of the utilitarian aspect of skiing: Was the ski faster than the snowshoe? Would a warden on skis catch more poachers than one on snowshoes?

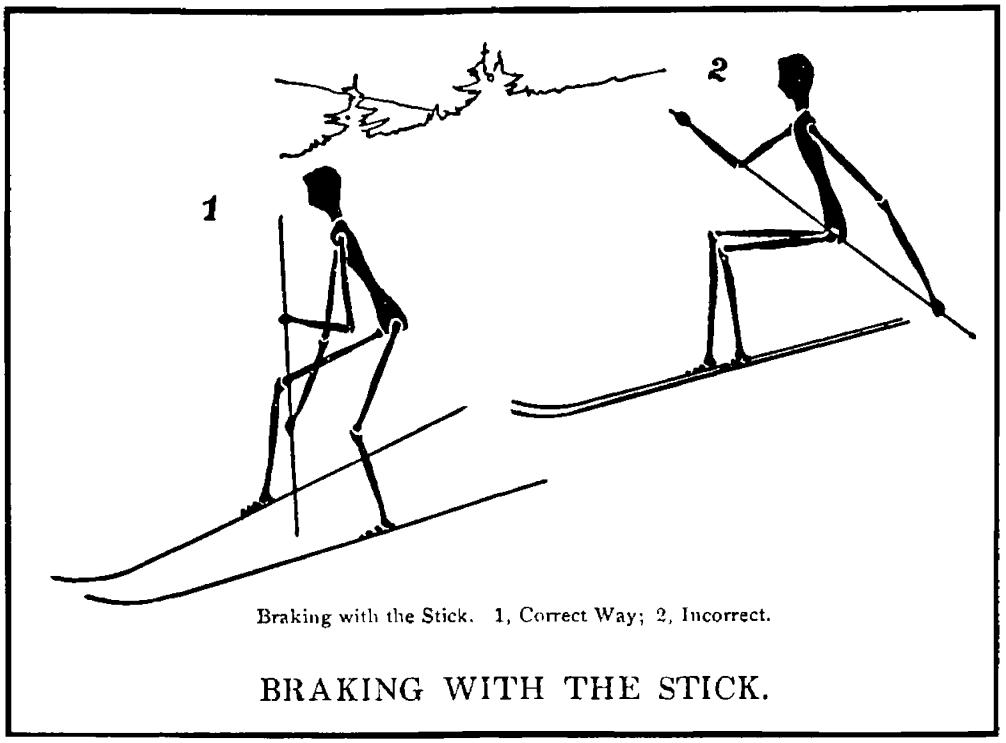
Indeed, skiing was far less organized in the East. While jumping competitions in the Midwest were seen as an economic boost to a town, in Maine locals jumped off little "thankee ma'ams" to add to the thrill of a meadow glide. The Johnsen Company did not attempt to control the development of the

skisport for economic advantage but simply to engender interest in what immigrants perceived as a glorious activity, and if money could be made out of it, so much the better.[34] Besides, the year Johnsen produced its catalog, control of the sport was already in hand, with the formation of the National Ski Association.[35]

Out in Wisconsin, Martin Strand, who had been in the ski manufacturing business since 1896, admired the quality of the Johnsen skis, but knew exactly why they failed to sell; they were priced too high.[36] What Mainer had fifteen to forty-five dollars to spend on these frivolities in 1905? The elite clientele was too small to make the business pay. Those inclined to ski in Maine, Scandinavians and others who enjoyed winter out of doors, were few in number and widely scattered over the state. The market simply was not there for the high-quality products of the Portland company, and production was stopped after one or two seasons.

For us today, however, the Johnsen catalog holds great interest because it portrays aspects of skiing which combined the cultural traditions from Scandinavia and the foundations of modern sport – aspects which were becoming increasingly apparent, particularly in towns where large settlements of immigrants were located. Johnsen, aware of the enthusiasm for skiing in the Midwest and of isolated interest in New England, produced its sophisticated catalog first to instruct the wealthy on how to ski and second to show the appeal of skiing's outdoor enjoyment; it retained vestiges of the religiousness associated with *Idraet.*

From the instructional section, Mainers could learn to stand properly, herring-bone up a hill, do a kick turn, climb sideways, stem, and stop by stick-riding – but "only in cases of extreme need."[37] The Telemark swing was given pride of place in the instructions. "The excitement reaches its climax when the skidor, speeding down a sharp slope, strikes some inequality of ground or artificial rise and bounds through the air for a distance." A jump of a yard or two would whet the appetite for more.



Johnsen catalog, *Courtesy New England Ski Museum.*

Johnsen's catalog portrayed the ski-*Idraet* as something in which "a man – or a woman...for that matter," could "breathe in the clear crisp air and feasting the eyes on the passing landscape, enjoy its myriad panoramic charms." The catalog thus promoted the sport as a source of health and morality in a natural outdoor setting. Skiers were privileged, in a pantheistic sense, to experience "the enchantment of a picturesque country in a snowy shroud."[38] These carefully worked descriptions acquainted those who knew little or nothing of *Idraet* with the concept of skiing as a means to achieving a natural experience in God's winter countryside. Many, if not most sports have their origins in religious rites. Skiing, although it arose out of necessity, had similar religious connotations: Ullr, one of the most powerful of the Norse gods, was its protector.[39] This religious tradition, still attached to nineteenth-century skiing, was not lost on the Johnsen writer who attempted to pass on the Scandinavian winter heritage to the American upper classes.

Perhaps the Theo. Johnsen Company should have persevered, for a decade later isolated hostelries began to sense that

those who enjoyed Maine-woods hospitality in the summer might be tapped for winter business too. Although winter business would not "take off" until the 1920s and 1930s, as early as 1913 one of the owners of the Poland Springs Hotel spent the winter in Switzerland "taking notes with a view to developing winter sports on a large scale."[40] Before the Great War, Switzerland was invaded by the English upper classes, who appropriated both the art of skiing and the ritual of apres-ski. They started the Davos Ski Club, instituted tests, reserved hotels exclusively for themselves, insisted upon tea, pressured the Swiss railroads for cheap tickets, and imported English society holiday culture to a number of Swiss villages.[41]

The Poland Springs Hotel, like many of the grand hotels in the woods and mountains of New England, aped what the English wealthy considered proper, and skiing became one of the attractions. Two years later the Bethel Inn advertised its snow delights too: all the "real sports of winter," in which "snowshoeing over wonderful trails through pine and balsam forests" was evidently the most "real." But along with tobogganing, skating, and sleigh riding, skiing too found a niche in the inn's advertisement in the Portland *Eastern Argus*.[42] In 1917, the Portland Country Club's "biggest carnival yet" included a skiing exhibition for the first time. It apparently did not impress; only the hockey match was reported in the following day's paper.[43]

It is significant that the hoteliers took to advertising their winter delights in the newspapers. There was, evidently, a city clientele to be encouraged to spend leisure and money in the pure air of Bethel and Poland Springs. The refreshing aspect of a winter sojourn was an appeal to the wealthy urbanite. And then, perhaps even middle-class men and women might be attracted to skiing if they encountered its appeal. The Portland carnival provided such an incentive, as had the 1910 jumping exhibition in Central Park, New York.[44]

These modern trends, along with the formation of clubs, competition, and manufacturing enterprises which would emerge in the 1920s, were built on the first fifty years of ski activity in the state, during which the utilitarian use of skis gave over to

recreational development. Johnsen's Skeeing and the inns' promise of winter delights provide an insight into cultural transference when skiing was becoming a sport and a business – a harbinger of things to come.

Notes

[1]Gosta Berg, *Finds of Skis from Prehistoric Times in Swedish Bogs and Marshes* (Stockholm: Generalstabens Litografiska Anstats Forlag, 1950). The recent Russian claim was announced by Tass in *Aftenbladet* (Stockholm, January 25, 1985), *Svenska Dagbladet*, January 25, 1985, *Vasterbottens Kurieren*, January 26, 1985.

[2]Ake Svahn, "Idrott und Sport: eine semantische Studie zu zwei schwedischen Fachtermini," *Stadion* 5 (1979): 20-41. For a different view of *Idraet* based on Danish sources, see Peter Levine and Peter Vinten-Johansen, "Sports Violence and Social Crisis," in *Sport in America: New Historical Perspectives*, edited by Donald Spivey (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1985), pp. 222-23. For a contemporary view see Fridtjof Nansen, *Paa ski over Gronland* (Kristiania: Aschenhoug, 1890), p. 78.

[3]Theodore Blegen, *Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition* (New York: Haskell House, 1940, reprinted 1969). Stanley S. Guterman, "The Americanization of Norwegian Immigrants: A Study in Historical Sociology," *Sociology and Social Research* 52 (1968): 252-70; George N. Stephenson, "The Background of the Beginnings of Swedish Immigration, 1850-1875," *American Historical Review* 31 (1926): 708-23. In 1880 out of a total of 18,822 foreign-born in Maine, 99 were Norwegian and 988 were Swedish. By 1900 the figures were: 509 Norwegians and 1,945 Swedish. *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1897), pp. 495, 512; *Twelfth Census of the United States, taken in the Year 1900. Part 1: Population* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Office, 1901), p. 758. At the close of 1871, Thomas reported that there were 1,000 Swedish living in Maine, over half of them in New Sweden. *Reports of the*

Board and Commissioner of Immigration, 1873 (Augusta, Maine: Sprague, Owen and Nash, 1873), p. 13.

[4]*Billed-Magasin* (May 1, 1869), p. 172.

[5]The best visual presentation of early Californian skiing is in the documentary film, *Legends of American Skiing*, directed by Richard W. Moulton. The film, which premiered in New York in 1982, was later shortened for PBS in 1985-1987. The Western Skisport Museum, Boreal Ridge, California, has the most extensive collection of Californian ski material. The National Ski Hall of Fame, Ishpeming, Michigan, has the most extensive holdings of midwestern artifacts.

[6]The races were reported in the local mountain press regularly. For women's racing, see E. John B. Allen, "Sierra `Ladies' on Skis in Gold Rush California," *Journal of Sport History* 17 (Winter 1990): 347-53.

[7]Helen M. White, *The Tale of a Comet and Other Stories* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Press, 1984), chapter 6, "Ski-Sport Heroes from Norway," pp. 128-51. For the development of the National Ski Association, see E. John B. Allen, "The Modernization of the Skisport: Ishpeming's Contribution to American Skiing," *Michigan Historical Review* 16 (Spring 1990): 1-20.

[8]*Report of the Commissioners on the Settlement of the Public Lands of Maine* (Augusta, Maine: Sprague, Owen and Nash, 1870), p. 4. William Widgery Thomas, Jr., *Sweden and the Swedes* (Chicago: Rand, McNally, 1892), p. 1.

[9]*Report of the Commissioners (1870)*, pp. 3, 5; *Hemlandet* (Chicago), July 27, 1864, cited in Florence E. Janson, *The Background of Swedish Immigration, 1840-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), p. 255. See also W.W. Thomas, Jr., to Assistant Secretary of State F.W. Seward, February 12, September 16, 1864, U.S. Consular Letters, Gothenburg, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

[10]*Report of the Commissioners (1870)*, p. 12.

[11]Charlotte L. Melvin, "The First Hundred Years in New Sweden," *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* 21 (1970): 232-47. For other views of the colony, see Clifford and Marguerite Weden, "The Beginnings of New Sweden, Maine," *Yearbook of the*

American Swedish Foundation: 1946 (Philadelphia: American Swedish Foundation, 1946), pp. 85-96; Arne S. Menton, "Children in the Woods," *American-Scandinavian Review* (December 1953), pp. 333-37. Thomas himself chronicled the New Sweden story in "Historical Oration by Hon. W.W. Thomas, Jr., Founder of New Sweden," in *Celebration of the Decennial Anniversary of the Founding of New Sweden, Maine, July 23, 1880* (Portland, Maine: B. Thurston, 1881), and in *The Story of New Sweden as Told at the Quarter Centennial Celebration of the Founding...* (Portland, Maine: Loring, Short and Harmon, 1896).

[12]*Report of the Commissioners (1870)*, pp. 3,5.

[13]*Reports of the Board and Commissioner of Immigration (1872)* (Augusta, Maine: Sprague, Owen and Nash, 1872), pp. 11, 12.

[14]*Ibid., pp. 13-14.*

[15]Thomas, "Historical Oration," p. 57; *Story of New Sweden*, p. 79. Most of the records of early New Sweden were lost when the local museum burned in 1971.

[16]Thomas, *Sweden and the Swedes*, p. 182.

[17]*Reports of the Board and Commissioner of Immigration (1873)*, p. 13.

[18]Frederick E. Jorgensen, *25 Years a Game Warden* (Brattleboro, Vermont: Stephen Daye Press, 1937), pp. 65, 67, 96, 98, 122-23.

[19]*Oral histories from Harold Day and Adin McKeown, nos. 678.037 and 1284.009, Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History, University of Maine. I am grateful to archives director Dr. Edward D. Ives for these references.*

[20]*Machias Republican*, February 5, 1910.

[21]*The New England Ski Museum in Franconia Notch, New Hampshire, recently received the oldest extant Maine skis to date, E 89.6.1. Made in 1895, they apparently came from within thirty or forty miles of Damariscotta. They are crude, homemade ash skis, seven feet, nine inches long, with short pointed tips. If any reader knows of other nineteenth- or early twentieth-century Maine-made skis, the author would appreciate the details.*

[22]*On exhibit in the New Sweden Historical Society, New Sweden, Maine.*

[23]"When Skis were a Dollar A Foot," an interview with Henry Anderson, in *Silver Birches* (published by students from Stockholm and New Sweden, Maine, n.d.), p. 15. Interviews with Ralph Ostlund and Harold Bondeson, New Sweden, Maine, August 29, 1990.

[24]The photos will be found in *Appalachia* 17 (May 1951), facing p. 313, and 19 (June 1952), facing p. 56. The "swish-and-walk" expression is taken from the *New York Times*, January 21, 1900.

[25]*Information from Susan Chandler of Brunswick. I should like to thank Ms. Chandler for the personal recollections of her father and of Norman Libby and for permission to use the accompanying photograph.*

[26]*Gorham Mountaineer*, February 22, 1905. The skis Norman Libby used are kept in the office of the manager of the Mt. Washington Auto Road.

[27]*Among the Clouds*, July 17, 1907. Newspaper clipping, n.d., ca. 1907, belonging to Susan Chandler.

[28]See Apperson papers, Adirondack Research Center, Schenectady Museum, Schenectady, New York; Tony Goodwin, "Challenge Skiing: High Peaks Adventures," *Adirondack Life* (January-February, 1895), p. 26.

[29]Figures derived from *Skisport* (1910-1911), pp. 11, 18.

[30]"In the San Juan Mountains," *Harper's Weekly* (January 9, 1883), p. 365; Royal Hubbell, "Ski Running," *Frank Leslie's Monthly* 35 (January 1893): 64-67; H.H. Lewis, "Ski Running," *Munsey's Magazine* 22 (February 1900): 665-68.

[31]Theo. A. Johnsen Company, *The Winter Sport of Skeeing* (Portland, Maine, 1905). For skees, see pp. 42-45; bindings, pp. 45-57; push sticks, p. 48; foot wear, pp. 53-54.

[32]C.H. Blair, "Skees and How to Make and Use Them," excerpt from *Harper's Young People* (1892), in Dartmouth College Special Collections, Baker Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, is representative. Part of the Johnsen catalog was reprinted in the *Ishpeming Iron Ore*, December 10, 1905.

[33]Johnsen, *Skeeing*, pp. 6-7.

[34]*I take this notion of control of a sport from Stephen Hardy, "The*

Sporting Goods Industry and the Rise of Sport, 1880-1900," paper delivered to the North American Society for Sport History, Capitol University, Columbus, Ohio, May 24, 1987, and other presentations.

[35]*Allen, "Modernization of the Skisport."*

[36]*Martin Strand to F.C. Barton, New Richmond, Wisconsin, March 10, 1914, 14.023 Apperson Papers, Adirondack Research Center, Schenectady, New York.*

[37]Johnsen, *Skeeing*, pp. 16-28, for instructions.

[38]*Ibid., pp. 6,8.*

[39]Bergen Evans, *Dictionary of Mythology Mainly Classical* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Centennial Press, 1979), pp. 229-30. Maria Leach, editor, *Dictionary of Folklore, Myth and Legend* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1950), II, p. 1158.

[40]C.J.W. Tennant, "Ski-ing in the United States," *Year-Book of the Ski Club of Great Britain* (1914), p. 374.

[41]For example, see *Times* (London), January 8, 1907; E.C. Richardson, "British Ski-ing, At Home and Abroad," *Aarbok* (1913): 125; E.C. Richardson, "Early Days," *British Ski Year Book* 1 (1920): 11-13.

[42]*Eastern Argus* (Portland), February 19, 1916.

[43]*Ibid., February 22, 1917.*

[44]New York Times, January 17, 1910.

E. John B. Allen is professor of history at Plymouth State College and historian for the New England Ski Museum, Franconia, New Hampshire. He is the author of several articles on skiing and skisport, including most recently "Sierra 'Ladies' on Skis in Gold Rush California," JOURNAL OF SPORT HISTORY (Winter 1990), and "The Modernization of the Skisport: Ishpeming's Contribution to American Skiing," MICHIGAN HISTORICAL REVIEW (Spring 1990). His monograph on the history of American skiing, tentatively titled FROM SKISPORT TO SKIING, will be issued by the University of Massachusetts Press.